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## MERCY of the Merciful. Is this the end...or the beginning?

It makes your head spin. Technology. It turns around quicker than the blink of an eye. Its grip on the globe is now irreversible. Flagged by information systems and the rise of social media as the integral means of communication, it is clear that there is little any type of resistance may achieve, except further alienate you, and only to your own detriment, against a system that is now totally in power.

We have been warned. We were warned 14 centuries ago of the advent of Dajjaal. This satanic manifestation, becoming more and more apparent, is fast gaining momentum, supposing that the means of mind-control from individual to world level, has largely been secured. The fear is that it may no longer be possible for us to block this out. Are we being lined up for the coup-de-grace? Has the final countdown begun?

Since the signs and evidence are in abundance, it shows the mercy of Allah has not abandoned us. Those wise and priceless utterances of the Messenger (ﷺ) of Allah made during the most perfect of times remain as the guidance and means of recognition and understanding of the situation today. That most of his prophesies have already come to pass is but a mercy of Guidance. The mere observation and ability to understand these signs even now is a mercy of the magnitude of "and what did we send you as (Oh Muhammad) except as a witness, a bearer of the glad tidings, and a warner?"

The Divine Book, al-Qur'an (the Criterion), and the exemplified observance of its message in the personality and behaviour of the Messenger (ﷺ) is still with us. This combination is the salvation and the deliverance from what is otherwise a cursed ending, doomed with failure. While the mercy is upon us, it is never too late, and there is hope.

Reflect, Remember, Realise, Repent, Reform. This may well be the lucky formula to save our souls, to save our beliefs, to save the ummah, to save humanity, to save the world. When the blessed Nabi (ﷺ) suggested that we position ourselves "between fear and hope", he was giving us the strategy to cope with these changing times while maintaining our faith and executing the "amaanah" of the children of Adam, entrusted by Allah.

So if the milestones and signs have been spot-on thus far, it is expected that the end of times will not be failure, but ultimately witness the raised flag of victory for Truth. For Islam. For the Believers. "And Allah is the best of Planners."

May Allah gift us with awareness, discernment, and determination to pursue the illuminated "siraatal mustaqeem" (the right path), and to honour our leader, our patron, our teacher Muhammad Mustafa (ﷺ) whose nation we represent as Muslims! Allahumma salli wa sallim wa baarik alaa Muhammad wa Aalihi wa Sahbihi ajma'een!

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# HAZRAT ABD ALLAH IBN UMAR ﷺ

(Son of Hazrat Umar Farouk ؓ)

Abd Allah Ibn Umar's allegiance to his Beloved Prophet (ﷺ) began very early. He was only a child when he migrated with his father to Madinah but his devotion to the Prophet (ﷺ) had already taken root. Even at the tender age of 13 he followed his father to battle of Badr hoping to partake amongst the Mujaahideen. The Prophet (ﷺ) denied him this opportunity, as he was still far too young. His life however did allow ample other opportunities as he lived gracefully until the age of 85, through the mercy of ALLAH (ﷻ). If one looks at this long life, one will only find persistence, repentance and piety - everywhere and all the time.

He was a sterling example to the Muslims, equipped with the most noble of virtues and model behaviour in every respect. This he learnt from non other than his remarkable father, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (ؓ). Abd Allah's love and respect for the Sunnah was striking and commands great admiration. He would closely watch the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) so that he could imitate His (ﷺ)'s deeds carefully and in the greatest detail. Ibn Umar would supplicate only on the exact same spot where his Huzoor (ﷺ) prayed. He would sit if the Prophet (ﷺ) sat & stand if He (ﷺ) stood.

Every Sunnah was carried out with immense care and accuracy. For example, on reaching Makkah, the Prophet (ﷺ)'s camel turned twice at a certain spot, looking for a suitable place before it stopped. The Prophet (ﷺ) then prayed 2 rakahs there. Abd Allah would ensure that his camel did the same on reaching that spot and would then pray- such was the love and reverence he had for his Huzoor (ﷺ)! Abd ALLAH Ibn Umar was a precious gift to the Muslims for as long as he lived, they would have the perfect mentor to guide them towards the Sunnah.

At a time in Islamic history when luxury, rank and status became abundantly available, Ibn Umar obstinately declined temptation. On several occasions he refused to accept the prestigious position of judge and of Caliph. He chose rather to further himself in piety and worship. On hearing a

warning verse from the Quraan Ibn Umar would weep until he felt weak. He was ever conscious of his Lord and ever fearing of his destiny. Wealth was never for him. All he wanted was one gown to cover his body and just enough food to keep him alive. He did not satisfy his hunger for more than 40yrs. This was not due to poverty but was a conscious pursuit of the Sunnah of self-denial and piety. Whatever he received of this world, he would distribute immediately. His generosity had no bounds. Abd ALLAH would never eat alone. The poor and orphaned always shared his meals.

During the period of civil strife Ibn Umar maintained a strict position of neutrality. Despite repeated urgings from the Muslims to become actively involved he consistently refused. He was being forced to accept the position of Caliph at that time with the threat of his life. Nothing would however scare into changing his position. Ibn Umar was no hypocrite! It was the command of ALLAH (ﷻ) not to shed the blood of another Muslim. He stood firm to this commandment. Ibn Umar would never even awaken a sleeping Muslim.

His abstention from the fighting or any involvement in it was not due to cowardice, passivity or a hesitance to accept responsibility. It was the result of a fear of ALLAH - he simply refused to whole a sword in the face of a Muslim brother. It brought him great pain and sorrow to see the Blood shed. Having no power to change things, he simply remained at home.

Abd Allah was able to withstand all the changes happening in his time. He was not moved by all the luxury and ambition but remained devoted to asceticism, humility, piety and peace. In an era of worldly progress and expansion, Ibn Umar's vision did not detract but magnified in focus on pure spiritual upliftment. His perseverance extended right until his departure from this world in A.H. 73. Such an amazing accomplishment can only be met with a splendid reward in the Hereafter!

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# A RECIPE TO KILL YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW...

BY ABU MUHAMMAD YUSUF

Oh no!..that Mother-in Law again! Won't she ever leave me alone? My mother-in-law frequently forgets that she was once a daughter-in-law!...A mother-in-law made of sugar, still tastes bitter!

The battle rages for ages- "Mother-in-Law vs Daughter-in-Law". Yet the solution is so simple to end "The War"... Treat each other with the respect they deserve and you would have a perfect relationship.

A long time ago in South Africa , a girl named Miriam got married and went to live with her husband and mother-in-law. In a very short time, Miriam found that she couldn't get along with her mother-in-law at all. Their personalities were very different, and Miriam was angered by many of her mother-in-law's habits. In addition, she criticized Miriam constantly.

Days passed, and weeks passed. Miriam and her mother-in-law never stopped arguing and fighting. But what made the situation even worse was that, according to ancient African tradition, Miriam had to obey her mother-in-law's every wish. All the anger and unhappiness in the house was causing Miriam's poor husband Musa great distress.

Finally, Miriam could not stand her mother-in-law's bad temper and dictatorship any longer, and she decided to do something about it! Miriam went to see her late father's good friend, Mr Hakuna a traditional healer and an ex-Sangoma (witch- doctor). Mr Hakuna just recently became a Muslim and changed his name to Haakim. He was made aware that witch-craft (jadoo) is totally prohibited in Islam. Miriam remembers that Mr Haakim used to many years ago sell herbs and muti (magic powder) and was notorious for his evil mystical powers. She told him the situation and asked if he would give her some poison so that she could solve the problem once and for all.

Mr. Haakim thought for a while, and finally said, ' Miriam , I will help you solve your problem, but you must listen to me and obey what I tell you.

Miriam said, 'Yes, Mr. Haakim, I will do whatever you tell me to do.' She was now desperate. 'Mr. Haakim who was now a good Muslim had repented and changed his former evil ways. He went into the back room. Miriam could hear the sound of water flowing. Mr Haakim was performing wudhu and then took out his Musalla and performed salaah . After completing his salaah he lifted and his hands to towards the sky and made dua . Miriam could hear him talking and using the name Allah. Miriam believed that he was talking to the "Evil-Spirits" to help him make the deadly potion she urgently needed to kill her mother-in-law.

Mr Haakim returned in a few minutes with a package of herbs. He told Miriam, 'You can't use a quick-acting poison to get rid of your mother-in-law, because that would cause people to become suspicious. Therefore, I have given you a number of herbs that will slowly build up poison in her body. I will also as a bonus give you a magical word which you must say and then blow on her food when you are preparing it. Every other day prepare some delicious meal and put a little of these herbs in her serving. Thereafter say the magical word 'Bismillah' and blow into the food. Now,

in order to make sure that nobody suspects you, when she dies, you must be very careful to be actively friendly towards her. 'Don't argue with her, obey her every wish, and treat her like a queen.' Miriam was so happy.

She thanked Mr. Haakim and asked him how much she owed him. He told her that she was just like a daughter to him and her late father was his best friend so he could not charge her. Miriam hurried home to start her plot of murdering her mother-in-law. Finally she had the recipe she for so long desired.

Weeks went by, and months went by, and every other day, Miriam served the specially treated food to her mother-in-law. She never forgot to blow the magical word 'Bismillah' into whatever she prepared for her mother-in law. She remembered what Mr. Haakim had said about avoiding suspicion, so she controlled her temper, obeyed her mother-in-law, and treated her like her own mother.

After six months had passed, the whole household had changed. Miriam had practiced controlling her temper so much that she found that she almost never got mad or upset. She hadn't had an argument with her mother-in-law in six months because she now seemed much kinder and easier to get along with.

The mother-in-law's attitude toward Miriam changed, and she began to love Miriam like her own daughter. She kept telling friends and relatives that Miriam was the best daughter-in- law one could ever find. Miriam and her mother-in-law were now treating each other like a real mother and daughter. Miriam's husband Musa was very happy to see what was happening.

One day, Miriam came to see Mr. Haakim and asked for his help again. She said, 'Dear Mr. Haakim, please help me to keep the poison from killing my mother-in-law. She's changed into such a nice woman, and I love her like my own mother. I do not want her to die because of the poison I gave her.'

Mr. Haakim smiled and nodded his head.. 'Miriam, there's nothing to worry about. I never gave you any poison. When I accepted Islam and became a Muslim I gave up all evil practices and have completely abandoned doing or supporting evil. I now only obey Allah and Allah's Last and Final Messenger Muhammad (may peace be upon him). In Islam we are thought to be kind and to do good to others.'

The herbs I gave you were vitamins to improve her health and the magical word 'Bismillah' is a word from Allah's Final Book "The Quraan". Bismillah means I begin in the name of Allah(God). This is proven to be an "all-in-one" remedy. The only poison was in your mind and your attitude towards her, but that has been all washed away by the love which you gave to her and off course the main ingredient was the Help of Allah. Being relieved and fascinated Miriam thanked Mr Haakim immensely.

LESSONS: Treat each other with respect, love and the kindness they deserve and you will indeed see the best in them. There is a wise saying: 'The person who loves others will also be loved in return.' Indeed Allah Ta'ala might be trying to work in another person's life through you.



## BATTLE OF MU`TAH

It was the most significant and the fiercest battle during the lifetime of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, a preliminary and a prelude to the great conquests of the land of the Christians.

It took place in Jumada Al-Ula 8 A.H. / September 629 A.D. Mu'tah is a village that lies on the borders of geographical Syria.

The Prophet ﷺ him had sent Al-Harith bin 'Umar Al-Azdi on an errand to carry a letter to the ruler of Busra. On his way, he was intercepted by Sharhabeel bin 'Amr Al-Ghassani, the governor of Al-Balqa' and a close ally to Caesar, the Byzantine Emperor. Al-Harith was tied and beheaded by Al-Ghassani.

Killing envoys and messengers used to be regarded as the most awful crime, and amounted to the degree of war declaration. The Prophet ﷺ was shocked on hearing the news and ordered that a large army of 3000 men be mobilized and despatched to the north to discipline the transgressors. It was the largest Muslim army never mobilized on this scale except in the process of the Confederates Battle.

Zaid bin Haritha was appointed to lead the army. Ja'far bin Abi Talib would replace him if he was killed, and 'Abdullah bin Rawaha would succeed Ja'far in case the latter fell. A white banner was raised and handed over to Zaid.

The Prophet ﷺ recommended that they reach the scene of Al-Harith's murder and invite the people to profess Islam. Should the latter respond positively, then no war would ensue, otherwise fighting them would be the only alternative left. He ordered them: "Fight the disbelievers in the Name of Allāh, neither breach a covenant nor entertain treachery, and under no circumstances a new-born, woman, an ageing man or a hermit should be killed; moreover neither trees should be cut down nor homes demolished." At the conclusion of the military preparations, the people of Madinah gathered and bade the army farewell. 'Abdullah bin Rawaha began to weep at that moment, and when asked why he was weeping, he swore that it was not love for this world nor under a motive of infatuation with the glamour of life but rather the Words of Allāh speaking of Fire that he heard the Prophet peace be upon him reciting: "There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished." [19:71]

The Muslim army then marched northward to Ma'an, a town bordering on geographical Syria. There news came to the effect that Heraclius had mobilized a hundred thousand troops together with another hundred thousand men of Lakham, Judham and Balqain - Arabian tribes allied to the Byzantines. The Muslims, on their part had never thought of encountering such a huge army. They were at a loss about what course to follow, and spent two nights debating these unfavourable conditions. Some suggested that they should write a letter to the Prophet ﷺ seeking his advice. 'Abdullah bin Rawaha was opposed to them being reluctant and addressed the Muslims saying: "I swear by Allāh that this very object which you hold in abhorrence is the very one you have set out seeking, martyrdom. In our fight we don't count on number of soldiers or equipment but rather on the Faith that Allāh has honoured us with. Dart to win either of the two, victory or martyrdom." In the light of these words, they moved to engage with the enemy in Masharif, a town of Al-Balqa', and then changed direction towards Mu'tah where they encamped.

The right flank was led by Qutba bin Qatadah Al-Udhari, and the left by 'Ubadah bin Malik Al-Ansari.

Bitter fighting started between the two parties, three

thousand Muslims against an enemy fiftyfold as large.

Zaid bin Haritha, the closest to the Messenger's heart, assumed leadership and began to fight tenaciously and in matchless spirit of bravery until he fell, fatally stabbed. Ja'far bin Abi Talib then took the banner and did a miraculous job. In the thick of the battle, he dismounted, hamstrung his horse and resumed fighting until his right hand was cut off. He seized the banner with his left hand until this too was gone. He then clasped the banner with both arms until a Byzantine soldier struck and cut him into two parts. he was posthumously called "the flying Ja'far" or "Ja'far with two wings" because Allāh has awarded him two wings to fly wherever he desired there in the eternal Garden. Al-Bukhari reported fifty stabs in his body, none of them in the back.

'Abdullah bin Rawaha then proceeded to hold up the banner and fight bravely on his horseback while reciting enthusiastic verses until he too was killed. Thereupon a man, from Bani 'Ajlan, called Thabit bin Al-Arqam took the banner and called upon the Muslims to choose a leader. The honour was unanimously granted to Khalid bin Al-Waleed, a skilled brave fighter and an outstanding strategist.

It was reported by Al-Bukhari that he used nine swords that broke while he was relentlessly and courageously fighting the enemies of Islam. He, however, realizing the grave situation the Muslims were in, began to follow a different course of encounter, revealing the super strategy-maker, that Khalid was rightly called. He reshuffled the right and left flanks of the Muslim army and introduced forward a division from the rear in order to cast fear into the hearts of the Byzantine by deluding them that fresh reinforcements had arrived. The Muslims engaged with the enemies in sporadic skirmishes but gradually and judiciously retreating in a fully organized and well-planned withdrawal.

The Byzantines, seeing this new strategy, believed that they were being entrapped and drawn in the heart of the desert. They stopped the pursuit, and consequently the Muslims managed to retreat back to Madinah with the slightest losses. The Muslims sustained twelve martyrs, whereas the number of casualties among the Byzantines was unknown although the details of the battle point clearly to a large number. Even though the battle did not satisfy the Muslims' objective, namely avenging Al-Harith's murder, it resulted in a far-ranging impact and attached to the Muslims a great reputation in the battlefields.

The Byzantine Empire, at that time, was a power to be reckoned with, and mere thinking of antagonizing it used to mean self-annihilation, let alone a three-thousand-soldier army going into fight against 200,000 soldiers far better equipped and lavishly furnished with all luxurious conveniences. The battle was a real miracle proving that the Muslims were something exceptional not then familiar. Moreover, it gave evidence that Allāh backed them and their Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ, was really Allāh's Messenger. In the light of these new strategic changes, the archenemies among the desert bedouins began to reconcile themselves with the new uprising faith and several recalcitrant tribes like Banu Saleem, Ashja', Ghatfan, Dhubyān, Fazarah and others came to profess Islam out of their own sweet free will.

Mu'tah Battle, after all, constituted the forerunner of the blood encounter to take place with the Byzantines subsequently. It pointed markedly to a new epoch of the Islamic conquest of the Byzantine empire and other remote countries, to follow at a later stage.

# HAZRAT NAJMUDDIN KUBRA ﷺ

*Imam Raazi Rehmatullah Alay encountered Shaytaan at the time of His death and His Kaamil Peer-o-Murshid Hazrat Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra Radi Allahu Anhu saved Him.*

Najmudin-e-Qubra was a 13th-century Persian sufi from Khwarezm and the founder of the Kubrawiya, influential in the Ilkhanate and Timurid dynasty. His method, exemplary of a "golden age" of Sufi metaphysics, was related to the Illuminationism of Shahab al-Din Yahya ibn Habash Suhrawardi as well as to Rumi's Shams Tabrizi. Qubra was born in 540/1145 and died in 618/1221.

## The Story

As I've mentioned above that I want to die on Iman/Faith but it's not easy and this story will you about even for the Imam and Aalim of the Time it will be tough. Because Shataan appears right in front of you to snatch your Iman/Faith.

When the time of Imam Raazi's Jaan'Qani (time of death) came, he was on his death bed, Shaytaan appears to trick Him and to snatch the faith from Him. You won't believe what Shaytaan asked Him,

Shaytaan asked Imam Raazi " How do you believe in Allah, on what proof, what basis " .

Imam Raazi, upon hearing it, begun answering, He started giving answer but one by one Shaytaan rejected all those answers. He didn't stop there, and Shataan canceled his 40 reasons! Allahu Akbar can you believe it, Shaytaan sure is evil but still he has knowledge and Ilm.

But wait, His Kaamil Peer-o-Murshid and the friend of Allah Hazrat Najmuddin Kubra Radi Allahu the founder of Kubrawiya Sufi Order was watching Him while Imam Raazi was facing Shaytaan, He was watching every thing from His place from 100s of miles away.

As Shaikh Najmuddin Kubra was watching Imam Raazi, He knew that as the Shaytaan has already rejected 40 reasons, My Mureed (imam Raazi) will now run out of

answers, so from His Place while He was performing ablution, He said:

" O Raazi, stop giving Him reasons and why you dont simply say to him that You believe in Allah without any reason! Say you believe in Allah without any reason! "

Upon hearing it Shaytaan lost and ran off. The reason why Allah mentioned in Quran Surah Maida Ayat 35 is:

" O believers! Fear Allah and seek the means of approach to Him and strive in His way haply you may getprosperity. "

Friends of Allah and Kaamil Peer-o-Murshid are Waseela too, see how Najmuddin Kubra saved his Mureed from Shetan?

There's a famous saying that a Kaamil Shaikh knows what His Mureed/Follower is doing for example, see what happened to the Mureed of Ghouse Azam RadiAllahu Anhu and how the Sultanul Awliya helped him.

Once, one of the followers of Hazrat Ghouse Azam Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani Alayhi Rahma experienced Ihtilaam (wet dream) seventy times in the course of one night. Each time he would see himself with a different woman and upon waking up he would perform the ghusl. Some of the women he saw he actually knew and others were strangers. In the morning he went to Hazrat Ghouse Azam Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani Alayhi Rahma intending to complain about his condition. Before he could say anything Hazrat Ghouse Azam Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani Alayhi Rahma told him, "You must not feel bad about your state during last night. I saw your name inscribed on the Lawh-e-Mahfooz and I discovered from what was recorded upon it, that you would be guilty of committing adultery no fewer than seventy times. So I pleaded with Almighty Allah on your behalf until he changed that for you so that instead of being a conscious real-life experience, it would merely be a wet dream."

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*"O Mankind ! Eat of the lawful and good things from what is in the earth, and follow not the evil. Surely he is an open enemy to you (S2: V168)*

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# Taking Care Of Yourself During Excessive Heat

COMPILED BY HASINA BEGUM SAYED

The excessive heat can make everyone feel tired and grumpy and staying hydrated is key to navigating the worst of the summer heat. Everyone knows they should gulp down 8-10 glasses of water daily but in excessive heat conditions, but there is more you can do to keep yourself hydrated and healthy – including adding some foods and ways to add more electrolytes to your diet that help hydrate your cells.

Symptoms of early or mild dehydration include (one or more of the following):

- \* Fatigue and lack of energy and vitality
- \* Overall muscle weakness
- \* Dizziness and/or confusion
- \* Cramping in the arms and legs

1. Eat Watermelon – There's a reason watermelon is a summertime favorite – it's 90% water! Learn some new recipes and try grilled watermelon or watermelon, mint and feta salad to add more watermelon to your diet. Nothing beats a bowl of good old fashioned fresh watermelon!

2. Eat two-three celery stick to replenish levels of sodium, potassium, magnesium, and other vital minerals.

3. Rice – Choose brown over white and enjoy the benefits of additional water absorption thanks to the preparation of rice where each grain acts as a little tiny sponge soaking up water as it cooks.

4. Cucumbers – at 95 percent water content, a cup of cucumber slices is nearly as thirst-quenching as a glass of water. Cucumbers also provide a little fiber and some vitamin

5. Strawberries deliver the most vitamin C of all berries and also provide folate, a B vitamin that's essential for the healthy growth of new cells. And, since they're 91 percent water, they'll contribute significantly toward your overall fluid intake

6. Electrolyte Supplementation: There are just a few foods rich in electrolytes that people lose when they sweat and need to replenish them to regain energy. You can also add electrolytes to water or your favorite beverages, for example:

\* Coconut Water- very refreshing drink a high potassium and mineral content

Your body is 75% water and its needs more than just water to keep hydrated! Research shows that eating foods that are full of water helps keep you satisfied on fewer calories. So incorporate fresh fruits, vegetable, other nutrient dense foods and use electrolytes supplementation as needed to keep up our energy level and shape up our waist line not only during the summer months, but all year long!

People at risk during hot weather

Heat can affect anyone, but some people are at greater risk of serious harm from the effects of extreme heat. These include:

- \* older people
- \* babies and young children
- \* people with mental health problems
- \* people on certain types of medication – ask your doctor if you are at risk
- \* people with a chronic health condition such as breathing or heart problems
- \* people who already have a high temperature from an infection
- \* people who consume alcohol or use illegal drugs
- \* people with mobility problems
- \* people who are physically active such as manual workers or sports people

Keep out of the heat

- \* if a heatwave is forecast, plan your day so that you can stay out of the heat when possible
- \* avoid going out during the hottest part of the day between 11.00 am to 3.00 pm
- \* avoid strenuous outdoor activity such as sport or gardening or do this during cooler times of the day
- \* if you must go out, stay in the shade and wear a hat and loose-fitting cotton clothes
- \* if you are outside, take plenty of water with you
- \* don't leave babies or children alone in a parked car

Drink plenty

- \* drink regularly even if you do not feel thirsty – water or fruit juice are best
- \* try to tea and coffee as these can cause dehydration
- \* eat as you normally would, especially cold food such as salads and fruit



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## THE WOODEN BOWL

A frail old man went to live with his son, daughter-in-law, and a four-year old grandson. The old man's hands trembled, his eyesight was blurred, and his step faltered. The family ate together nightly at the dinner table. But the elderly grandfather's shaky hands and failing sight made eating rather difficult. Peas rolled off his spoon onto the floor. When he grasped the glass often milk spilled on the tablecloth. The son and daughter-in-law became irritated with the mess. "We must do something about grandfather," said the son. "I've had enough of his spilled milk, noisy eating, and food on the floor. So the husband and wife set a small table in the corner. There, grandfather ate alone while the rest of the family enjoyed dinner at the dinner table. Since grandfather had broken a dish or two, his food was served in a wooden bowl. Sometimes when the family glanced in grandfather's direction, he had a tear in his eye as he ate alone. Still, the only words the couple had for him were sharp admonitions when he dropped a fork or spilled food. The four-year-old watched it all in silence.

One evening before supper, the father noticed his son playing with wood scraps on the floor. He asked the child sweetly, "What are you making?" Just as sweetly, the boy responded, "Oh, I am making a little bowl for you and mama to eat your food from when I grow up." The four-year-old smiled and went back to work. The words so struck the parents that they were speechless. Then tears started to stream down their cheeks. Though no word was spoken, both knew

what must be done. That evening the husband took grandfather's hand and gently led him back to the family table.

For the remainder of his days he ate every meal with the family. And for some reason, neither husband nor wife seemed to care any longer when a fork was dropped, milk spilled, or the tablecloth soiled. Children are remarkably perceptive. Their eyes ever observe, their ears ever listen, and their minds ever process the messages they absorb. If they see us patiently provide a happy home atmosphere for family members, they will imitate that attitude for the rest of their lives. The wise parent realizes that every day that building blocks are being laid for the child's future.

Let us all be wise builders and role models. Take care of yourself, and those you love, today, and everyday!

*"And We have enjoined on man to be good and dutiful to his parents" [Soorah al-Ankaboot (29): 8]*

*"And your Lord has decreed (commanded) that you worship none but Him. And that you be dutiful to your parents." [Soorah al-Isra (17): 23]*

*"The Lord is pleased with the pleasing of the parents, and the Lord is angry with him who angers the parents." [Saheeh al-Jamee (3500)]*

## A SIN THAT LEADS TO JANNAH

IBN AL QAYYIM (رحمه الله) said...

"Sin may be more beneficial for a person, if it leads him to repent, than doing a lot of acts of worship. This is what is meant by the words of one of the salaf:

*'A person may commit a sin and enter Paradise because of it, or he may do an act of worship and enter Hell because of it.'*

They said: 'How is that?'

He said: 'He may commit a sin and continues to think about it, and when he stands or sits or walks he remembers his sin, so he feels ashamed and repents and seeks forgiveness and regrets it, so that will be the means of his salvation.

And he may do a good deed and continue to think about it, and when he stands or sits or walks he remembers it and it fills him with self-admiration and pride, so it is the cause of his doom.

So the sin may be the factor that leads him to do acts of worship and good deeds and to change his attitude so that he fears Allah and feels shy before Him and feels humiliated before Him, hanging his head in shame and weeping with regret, seeking his forgiveness of his Lord. Each of these effects is better for a person than an act of worship that makes him feel proud and show off and look down on people. Undoubtedly this sin is better before Allah and is more likely to bring salvation than one who admires himself and looks down on others, and who thinks that he is doing Allah a favour. Even if he says words that indicate something other than that, Allah is the Witness over what is in his heart. Such a person may feel hatred towards people if they do not hold him in high esteem and humiliate themselves before him. If he were to examine himself honestly, he would see that clearly."

-Madarij as-Salikeen, 1/299



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# Stoop to Conquer: 10 ways of honoring servants

By Sadaf Farooqi

Most Muslims in Eastern countries employ domestic staff as a norm. For some, domestic helpers are a priceless resource who significantly ease our day-to-day chores. Conversely, for others, they can be a source of distress and chagrin.

Many women complain to each other about the trouble they face from the incompetence, treachery, and intentional misdemeanor of their servants. However, we need to remind ourselves that it is in managing our helpers according to Islamic injunctions where the secret lies to get the best out of them.

## 1. Think of their pay as Sadaqah

We need to change the way we view our servants' wages. By considering it an "expense," we tend to extract "full value" of the money. For instance, even if a maid is sick, her employer might say, "I pay her to work, so she must work." But if we consider the salary a "Sadaqah" that helps fill their bellies, we will Insha Allah be more tolerant of their shortcomings as human beings.

## 2. Counsel them when they need it

You might notice that your domestic helpers are disturbed on some days. They are human beings who have problems and worries just like us. Ask them what is troubling them; then advise them to have patience and hope in Allah's mercy. Keep the counsel short, but show them that you care.

## 3. Forgive and forget their mistakes

Just like other human relationships, it is not pleasant to have your past mistakes and wrongs thrown in your face repeatedly. Forgive them for the sake of Allah if they wrong you, and do not be harsh when scolding them.

## 4. Do not accuse them of stealing, cheating or lying on mere suspicion

Many employers are guilty of this unfair action – as soon as something in the house is missing due to their own absentmindedness, the domestic helper is squarely accused of theft or negligence. "O you who believe! Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin." (Qur'an, 49:12). Ask them normally if they have seen the missing object, but do not accuse them of theft or misplacement. In most cases, the object is eventually found after the maid has been fired, causing guilt and embarrassment to the employer for life.

## 5. Informally teach them Islamic manners and knowledge

One of the rights of our domestic helpers upon us is that they be taught about Islam, or given its message if they are non-Muslims. Without being overtly 'preachy', give them small doses of the truth. The best way is to act upon Islam yourself. This will eventually make them love and respect you for the sake of Allah – which results in a sincere relationship devoid of mistrust and treachery.

## 6. Eat with them occasionally without separating utensils

Domestic helpers are not animals. Some people treat them as if they are unhygienic beings from another planet. Allow

them to use the utensils from which you and your family eat. If they have dirty habits, teach them hygiene. But do not separate their utensils as if they are untouchables. This will make them feel insulted. They will never return an insult with loyalty or obedience. Abu Bakr Bin Hafs said: "Abdullah Bin Umar would never eat food except in the company of an orphan."

## 7. Give them gifts

Reward their work – whatever it is like – with occasional bonuses in the form of clothing, shoes or other items that you are yourself using. Do not cast off broken, torn or damaged goods to them unless they agree to take them. This is part of the Islamic etiquette taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

## 8. Ease work when they are sick

Allow your helpers to go home early by reducing their chores when they are not feeling that well. Help them if they need money for medicines or medical treatment. Consideration such as this, without reminding them of these favors later, is a good way to establish a relationship based on mutual trust and care.

## 9. They are not robots

Domestic helpers are human beings with feelings and self-esteem. Any treatment that you would dislike for yourself would hurt them too. Scolding them in public, pointing out their faults before others, and allowing your children to mock at them or hit them or treat them disrespectfully are totally unacceptable behaviors. Treat them with honor and dignity.

## 10. You are not superior

"It is We Who portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world: and We raise some of them above others in ranks, so that some may command work from others." (Qur'an, 43:32)

It is one of Allah's laws of the universe that some people possess higher worldly ranks than others, so that they employ the services of the latter in return for wages. But this doesn't mean a wealthy person is superior than a poor person. This doesn't mean you are better than your servant.

Islam has mandated lofty treatment with slaves. But we don't show that even to servants who are mere employees, and not slaves.

Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) said to Abu Dharr regarding his treatment of his slave: "They are your brothers and servants whom Allah has placed under your authority. Anyone who has his brother under his authority let him feed him the same food as he eats and dress him in the same clothes as he wears. Do not overwhelm them with work and if you give them work to do then help them with it." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

Our servants are not our slaves. But is our treatment as good as what the Prophet (peace be upon him) commanded with regard to slaves during his time?



# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

MOULANA SHAH FAISAL KHAN SAHEB

Q1). How should a Muslim treat his brother?  
A1). Allah Ta'aala says in the Holy Quraan that "Indeed the Mumin (believers) are brothers."

So from this Ayat it can be understood that the respect we give our loved ones, the same respect our Muslim brothers deserve.

It is mentioned in a Hadith:

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim." So we should try our level best to reconcile between our brothers, we should try to cover the faults of one another, we should spread love amongst one another. This is what Islam teaches us. Islam is a religion of peace and it only order us to do peace amongst one another.

Today unfortunately people are found tale telling, backbiting and finding faults in one another. Backbiting is a grave sin and it is haraam. Allah Ta'aala says, "Would any one of you love to eat the meat (flesh) of his dead brother?"

So it is proven that backbiting is like eating the meat of ones dead brother. How awful and bad is this sin, and the punishment is very severe as well.

Once Nabi ﷺ was traveling on a mule and suddenly it refused to move. So Nabi ﷺ came down and the Sahaba asked, "Ya RasoolAllah ﷺ, what is the matter?" Nabi ﷺ said, "There are two graves below this earth and the people of the graves are being punished." Nabi ﷺ ordered for a fresh branch to be brought and he ﷺ placed it on the two graves and said, "As long as these branches remain fresh they will make tasbih of Allah and the punishment will be reduced."

Nabi ﷺ then said, "One was being punished because of backbiting and the other was being punished because of not saving himself from the drops of urine."

So we come to know that backbiting is very bad and harmful. May Allah Ta'aala save us! Aameen.

There are many types of backbiting such as

1. He's a liar
2. He's a deceiving
3. He's immodest. Etc

We should ponder and think that in our daily lives how much backbiting do we commit and we should ask forgiveness from all those people whom we hurt.

Q.) Is it correct to feed Walimah a week or month after the wedding?

A.) It is Sunnah to invite people for walimah and it holds great virtue if done with the intention of performing Sunnah. Walimah is a feast given the following morning of the nuptial night for one's family, friends and neighbours according to his capacity. The ruling of walimah is that it can only be called walimah if done after a day or two from the actual wedding day, thereafter it won't be regarded as walimah. (Fatawa Alamgiri Kitab-ul-Karahiyah)

Q.) Can any Muslim make Esaale Sawaab for himself while he is alive?

A.) Yes, he can by secretly giving charity to the destitute. It is the most excellent to secretly give charity to the needy. The Holy Hadith states, "Secret charity saves you from bad death and cools the wrath of Allah. (Lisan al Meezan).

To give Sadqah on your behalf while you are alive is better than Sadqah given on your behalf after death. Our Master, Sayyiduna Rasool ﷺ states, "A person came to the prophet of Allah and enquired: What is the greatest form of charity? The Prophet ﷺ replied, the best Sadqah is when you give charity while in good health and when you are in possession of wealth, when you desire to be wealthy and fear of being poor." Don't wait for the moment when your soul is stuck in the throat and then say, "Give so much charity to certain person and give certain person that much, etc."

It is useless to distribute your wealth on your last moments because it is already destined for the inheritance of others. (Muslim Shareef).

Q.) Can someone convey the Sawaab (reward) of his deeds like the Salaah, the Roza, the Haj and Zakaah to his marhooms or living ones?

A.) Yes, it is permissible to send the reward of one's good deeds, to both the living and the deceased, as it has been stated in Fatawa Hindiyyah as follows: it is permissible to convey the reward of one's deeds, salaah, fasting, zakaah, haj, recital of the Holy Quraan, Zikr, and the reward of visiting the Holy shrines and graves of prophets of Allah, the martyrs, Aulia-e-kiraam etc.

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## EGO EXPOSED

BY FAIZEL KHAMKAR

Ego brings about a false swagger impressing a few but exposing major fault lines in the individual having this ego. This human fault lines exposes racism, greed, callousness and a host of other flaws including a sense of instability. The most successful people have and will be those that have control of their ego and the most unsuccessful are those whose ego controls them. Sadly those with egos are not even aware of their failures and regard their failures as success, largely because of limited vision or hallucinations.

This ego is aptly displayed by the tweet (can be read as twit) President Donald Trump. In a recent tweet he displayed his racist attitude in condemning the African people. He had in the recent past also tweeted negatively on Pakistan. He has also gone public in claiming that the Americans are entitled to the natural resources of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. His proclamation on Jerusalem as though he owns Jerusalem and can therefore make unilateral decisions. All of these displays an ego maniac who is driven by bigotry, greed, self-glorification, a false sense of importance and an ill informed person. The greatness of America that he speaks about came about primarily because of the labour and sweat of the Africans brought to America at gunpoint and treated in the most inhumane fashion imaginable. The greatness of America which he craves for is steeped in the blood of innocent men, women and children whose only crime was that they were the legal owners of land and resources desired by the ego maniac predecessors (proudly called the founding fathers) of the current ego maniac. His most notable failure, which he is blinded to, is the rejection of the international community of the Idi Amin of America. It is his failure to see this reality that will bring his mirage of America becoming great again under his watch crashing around his ears. The unfortunate aspect is that once more the down trodden will be victimised, murdered and become subject to inhumane treatment. His limited vision does not allow him to understand that the enemies which he is creating will no longer be supportive of his unjust causes in his headlong pursuit for the gold at the end of the rainbow.

The second example is that of some of the members of the African National Council. At the elective conference held recently a resolution was passed to decriminalize prostitution. The women's league of the ANC had pushed for this in the year 2010. As a result a discussion paper was issued for public comment. This in turn resulted in sufficient protest being lodged with both legal and logical arguments that resulted in the plan being shelved. The main objections arose around the consequences of HIV/AIDS, the limitation of State resources, the greater likelihood of the envisaged problem escalating rather than being eradicated or controlled, the dignity of children and women outside of prostitution being compromised, human trafficking, the escalation of the drug problem, illegal immigrants increasing and a host of other issues. In passing this resolution the ANC in fact took steps to marginalise a segment of the community some of whom were supporters of the party. This defies logic as the party has a slim majority which may be reduced even further or may disappear completely after the next elections. The egoistic approach of believing that the ANC will rule until the end of time as per Jacob Zuma's public statement a few years back must be seen as a catastrophic approach. Currently the ANC is the best vehicle for governance in this country however an approach such as this may not auger well for this country. This ego driven attitude can only be deduced from another resolution taken at the conference with regard to land reform. This change will require a constitution amendment and can only be effected by a two third majority which the ANC does not have. When the required majority is not present then only an illusion of power could motivate such a resolution. This illusion could be symptomatic of the ego maniacal nature of the former president of the ANC, namely Jacob Zuma.

We need to be vigilant of these personalities as the disastrous consequences of the actions of these ego driven personalities will have a domino effect on every one.

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# Whatever Happened To Manners?

By Sister Jasmine Khan

I was travelling in a bus one day; it was crowded with school children on their way home. As I tried to tune out the chattering of shrill young voices, I looked around and felt that there was something wrong. Then I noticed that the seats were occupied by children, some as young as six or seven, while adults battled to keep steady standing in the aisle.

Many of us have forgotten some of the old school manners that our parents, grandparents, and teachers taught us. This is of course the key, manners or good conduct is instilled in us by our parents. After all, a child learns by watching, seeing and hearing what those around him do. In this increasingly frenetic world, making a good impression is vital, and good manners and respect for others can go a long way to ensuring that you do. There seems to be a lack of respect for what has been taught in the Quran and Sunnah when it comes to our behaviour. It is not that we do not know how we are supposed to behave; it seems more like a general carelessness in our conduct. "Good Manners" would appear to be a pet dinosaur, which is trotted out from time to time on very special occasions. In our daily life we seem to care more for our possessions than for those around us. We are so focussed on the material, that we ignore the spiritual. In our drive for the outer trappings we contaminate our souls, and the souls of those around us. It is a basic human need to be acknowledged; when we fail to respect others, we are denying them their uniqueness as a fellow creation of Allah Ta'ala.

All praise is due to Allah Ta'ala who created the universe and taught His greatest Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) the best of manners, purified his character and conduct and adopted him as His friend. This is our perfect example; in fact, we are commanded by Allah Ta'ala to follow the Sunnah, and if we do, we cannot go wrong. Allah Ta'ala says "Say, (O Muhammad, to mankind); If ye love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Allah Ta'ala is forgiving and Merciful. Say: Obey Allah and the messenger. But if they turn away, lo! Allah loveth not the disbelievers (in his guidance)". Quran: Surah 3; Verse 31-32. Outer good manners are a reflection of inner good conduct. Our behaviour is a direct result of our thoughts, and good character and conduct is manifested in our actions. When we exert the power given to us by Allah Ta'ala as our Creator, we access the light of secret power within; with good manners this power is expressed outwardly as a rhyme of beauty; the beauty of the soul and that of actions. Our Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never behaved as if he was greater than others. Nor did He belittle people, or cause them embarrassment or humiliation. He always greeted people kindly, and showed respect to elders as well as to children. He once said: "The dearest of you to me are those who have good manners." (Al-Bukhari)

However, when young people do not bother to greet elderly relatives living on their property, when they go to work and come back without checking up someone who lives a few steps from their back door, is it any wonder that the children do not bother to do so either. When parents shout at their children, address them without any respect for their feelings, are it any wonder that the youth of today are careless and have no respect for others?

Almighty Allah Ta'ala says: "Certainly you have in the Messenger of Allah Ta'ala an excellent exemplar for those who hope in Allah Ta'ala and the latter day and remember Allah Ta'ala much." (Al-Ahzab 33:21)

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) practised what he preached; he showed how we should live as individuals and as members of the society. He disciplined himself by staying aloof from quarrels and quibbles. He never engaged in bad language. How refreshing when we consider how most of us cannot refrain from getting involved in the problems of others. His exemplary manners make him a model for us to follow. He stressed the importance of good manners. He said: "The best of you is the best among you in conduct: (Al-Bukhari and Muslim) Also: "The heaviest thing to be placed in the balance of a believing slave on the Day of Judgement will be good behaviour. And Allah Ta'ala hates the one who uses bad language" (Hadith-AL Bayhaqi). Should we not take cognisance of this when next we feel like shouting of insulting those dear to us?

When asked what one needs to get to Jannah, The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) answer was: "Piety and good conduct"

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) went even further to declare that we will inhabit different levels in Jannah, based on good manners: "The dearest and nearest among you to me on the Day of Resurrection will be the one who is the best in conduct." (Ibn An-Najjaar).

Ethics in Islam is different from any other ethical system because it is derived from a Divine source; the revelation from Allah Ta'ala. It cannot be changed, or manipulated to fit our desires. It applies regardless of time or place. This system has not been changed for thousands of years. What was considered good morals in the past will remain as good morals throughout time. What was considered as bad morals in the past will also remain so forever, even if society accepts it as a norm. The system of ethics is not affected by cultural norms, because Allah Ta'ala is the One who determines what is acceptable and what is not. The Noble Quran is very detailed and clearly mentions the significance of good manners. No other ethical system can match it. It teaches humans how to deal with every aspect of their lives; it is not a man made system; it is the Deen of Allah Ta'ala. He made it complete and integrated. Unlike other ethical systems, Islam's moral system is a very detailed and complete package. Islam addresses every aspect of human life, no matter how minor. It does not lack anything that needs to be completed nor does it have any defects that need to be amended. The Deen of Islam guides our morals that deal with the individual, the community, and Muslims and non-Muslims alike. It also guides us on how to deal with rulers and how to honour and respect scholars. Islam even directs us on how to act during times of peace and war.

Allah Ta'ala favoured us by sending us Rasulullah (peace be upon him), so that he may teach us wisdom. Let us reflect on Allah Ta'ala's words, study the Sunnah; and resolve to follow it, Insha'Allah. If you want a successful and happy life, then simply apply Islam to it, and you will have wonderful results. Good manners, self respect and respect for others go hand in hand. What a lovely gift to give to our children.



# INTERNATIONAL NEWS FOCUS

BY FAKIR HASSEN

New Delhi, India – The right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government has announced the end of a decades-long policy of offering discounted airfares to Muslims going on Hajj. The BJP accused its predecessors, the Congress Party, of having introduced the Hajj assistance scheme in the 1970s in order to lure Muslim voters through handouts. Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said the government wants to assist India's roughly 175 million Muslims without resorting to political "appeasement" along religious lines. "Development with dignity is what we believe in," he said in announcing the decision to scrap the travel subsidy. He said the cash saved from the scheme would be channelled into economic opportunities and education for Muslims, who make up about 14 percent of India's 1.25 billion population. Every year more than 100 000 pilgrims travel from India for Hajj. India's top court said in 2012 that the scheme should be phased out, and that it contravened a fundamental tenet of Islam - that only those who could afford to make the pilgrimage do so.

Cairo, EGYPT - Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has again blasted US President Donald Trump in a fiery and emotional speech, saying the U.S. leader's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital was "sinful and ill-fated." Addressing the Al-Azhar International Conference in Support of Jerusalem in Cairo, he said that the United States had disqualified itself from continuing as a broker in the long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace process, a role America has had for decades. Last

month Trump announced his decision to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem, prompting international outrage. Pope Francis reiterated his call to respect the status quo of Jerusalem as he addressed ambassadors from more than 180 countries. On December 21, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a Turkish-sponsored resolution rejecting Trump's move by a vote of 128-9, with 35 abstentions.

Jeddah, SAUDI ARABIA - The General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) strongly condemned the offensive and racist comments which were made by US President Donald Trump against African nations and other countries that went viral on social media. The OIC said that these statements incited hatred and underestimated the entire continent, on which there are a number of Muslim countries. The OIC condemnation as in line with a similar approach adopted by the United Nations and the African Union decrying Trump's offensive remarks.

Dhaka, BANGLADESH – The Bangladeshi government has agreed to complete the process of returning Rohingya Muslims to Myanmar within two years after repatriation begins. According to the deal, Bangladesh will establish five transit camps from which returnees would be received initially in two reception centres on the Myanmar side. More than 650,000 Rohingyas were forced to flee the Buddhist country since August last year in military actions described by the UN as "ethnic cleansing."

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London, UK - The British Army has released a new advert film showing a Muslim soldier praying as it defied critics of an inclusive recruitment campaign. The new film, called 'Keeping My Faith', shows a soldier taking off his helmet and kneeling down in prayer while his comrades wait respectfully nearby.

Jeddah, SAUDI ARABIA - A Saudi private company has opened the first car showroom for women only, just five months before a landmark decision allowing females to drive takes effect. The showroom was opened in a shopping mall in the western Red Sea port city of Jeddah to allow women the freedom to choose their own cars before they hit the road. In a historic decision late last year, King Salman gave Saudi women the right to drive, abolishing an almost three-decade ban based on cultural reasons. The showroom offers a wide selection of vehicles from various makes and is staffed by women only. In other moves regarding the rights of women, history was made when the government allowed women to enter a football stadium for the first time to watch a match. The government has also declared that women aged 25 and over can now be granted a tourist visa to go to Saudi Arabia alone. However, women under 25 must still be accompanied by a family member, as was the case in the past.

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